

REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE

SEATON (DEVON) URBAN COUNCIL

1938

No. 2 SANITARY AREA.

comprising :—

AXMINSTER RURAL.

AXMINSTER URBAN.

HONITON RURAL.

HONITON BOROUGH.

SEATON URBAN.

SEATON URBAN.

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Seaton Urban District Council

REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR 1938

*The Chairman and Members of the
Seaton Urban District Council*

Gentlemen—

I have much pleasure in presenting my Annual Report, and which deals with Public Health matters and the Sanitary Administration of your district for 1938.

You are aware, on October 1st, 1938, Seaton Urban District Council was included in No. 2 Sanitary Area, and I had the honour of being appointed your Medical Officer of Health for the combined Districts.

The only difference this makes is, that you now have a Medical Officer of Health who is not engaged in Private Practice, and is, at the same time, directly responsible to each Council.

It must be remembered, in producing this report, that I am rather at a disadvantage, as I have to depend on others for the period of the first nine months of 1938.

Natural and Social condition of the Urban District.

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|----------------|
| Area (Acres) | - | - | - | 1190·43 Acres. |
| Population | - | - | - | 2501. |
| No. of Inhabited Houses | | | - | 850. |
| Rateable Value | | - | - | £28,416. |
| Sum represented by a penny rate | | | | £114. |

Seaton is a small residential seaside town and health resort, but is rapidly growing with a good class of residential houses. Convalescents find the bracing air extremely beneficial after an illness, and there is no doubt that those suffering from Pulmonary or Cardiac conditions derive great benefit from a stay at Seaton.

There is also the fishing industry, which employs quite a few fishermen.

I am glad to report that the general health of the District has been very good for 1938. Like every popular seaside resort, there is always a great risk of Infectious Disease being brought into the District by the numerous visitors in the summer-time, but fortunately, Seaton can congratulate themselves on their immunity from Infectious Disease.

During the period under review, Seaton was absolutely free of Typhoid, Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria, a record which I think would be very hard to beat.

There was one of Puerpural Pyrexia reported, but I am glad to say the patient recovered.

Water Supply.

Although the water supply is generally satisfactory, with the continued growth of Seaton, especially as a residential area, it will be necessary to augment our supplies in the near future.

Prevalence and Control of Infectious and other Diseases.

As I have stated earlier in my report, the District has been free of Infectious Disease, so I have nothing to relate under this section of my report.

No Immunisation Clinic has been established in Seaton Urban District.

Prevention of Blindness

No action was taken under section 176, Public Health Act, 1936.

Tuberculosis.

No action has been required under the Public Health prevention of Tuberculosis regulations 1925, relating to persons suffering from Tuberculosis engaged in the Milk Trade, or, under section 172 of the Public Health Act 1936, relating to the compulsory removal to hospital of persons suffering from Tuberculosis.

Drainage and Sewerage.

The laying of the new Sewer will be completed in 1939, and I hope this will deal with the complaints of flooding.

Milk Supplies.

The number of samples taken for examination for cleanliness during the year was 3, all three samples proved on examination to be satisfactory.

Birth Rate Table.

The No. of Births registered were 33 as compared with 21 in 1937.

| | | | | |
|------|---|---|------|-----------------------------|
| 1937 | - | - | 8.9 | per 1000 of the population. |
| 1938 | - | - | 13.2 | " " " " " " |

During 1938, there were 0 Illegitimate Births; also I beg to report, 0 Still Births.

Death Rate Table.

The number of deaths registered from all causes was 40 as compared with 19 in 1937 — 21 males, 19 females.

| | | | | |
|------|---|---|------|-----------------------------|
| 1937 | - | - | 9.8 | per 1000 of the population. |
| 1938 | - | - | 15.9 | " " " " " " |

This is unfortunately a very heavy increase in the deaths.

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

The number of deaths registered (under 1 year) was one.

PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS.

The number of deaths registered from Pulmonary Tuberculosis was 1, and from Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis, also one.

CANCER.

The number of deaths registered from Cancer was seven.

Death-Rate Table (contd.)

| M. | F. |
|----|----|
| 21 | 19 |

Causes of Death Table.

| | M. | F. |
|------------------------------------|----|----|
| Other Digve. Dis. | 0 | 1 |
| Cong. Deb. and Premature Birth ... | 1 | 0 |
| Violence (excluding suicide) ... | 2 | 0 |
| Other defd. Disease | 1 | 3 |
| Diabetes | 1 | 1 |
| Cerebral Haem. | 1 | 0 |
| Heart Disease | 7 | 6 |
| Other Circ. Dis. | 0 | 1 |
| Pneumonia | 1 | 0 |
| Peptic Ulcer | 1 | 0 |
| Appendicitis | 1 | 0 |
| Cirrhosis of Liver | 1 | 0 |
| Influenza | 1 | 1 |
| Tuberculosis of Respiratory System | 0 | 1 |
| Other Tuberculosis | 1 | 0 |
| Cancer | 2 | 5 |
| Total | 21 | 19 |

**DEATHS OF INFANTS
UNDER ONE YEAR.**

| | | |
|---------------------|---|---|
| Legitimate | 1 | 0 |
| Illegitimate | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 1 | 0 |

LIVE BIRTHS.

| | | |
|---------------------|----|----|
| Legitimate | 17 | 16 |
| Illegitimate | 0 | 0 |

STILL BIRTHS.

| | | |
|---------------------|---|---|
| Legitimate | 0 | 0 |
| Illegitimate | 0 | 0 |

General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

1. Hospitals provided or subsidised by the Local Authority, or by the County Council.

A. (1) Fever. Cases of Enteric Fever, Scarlet Fever and Diphtheria are received at the County Council's Isolation Hospital, at Whipton, Exeter.

(2) Small Pox. No local provision. The C.C. has undertaken to provide accommodation for any cases from the Seaton district.

B. (1) Tuberculosis. The C.C.'s Sanatoria at Ivy-bank, Exeter, and Hawkmoor, near Bovey Tracey, receive cases from this district.

(2) Maternity and Children. Only the Union Infirmary, at Honiton.

(3) General. There is no Hospital provisions for poor persons in the district. General and Special Hospital Treatment is obtained in Exeter at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, the Eye Infirmary, and the Princess Elizabeth Hospital for Crippled Children or in the Union Infirmary, Honiton.

(4) There is no Institutional Provisions for unmarried mothers, illegitimate infants and homeless children, except such as is provided at the Union Infirmary, Honiton.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

(*a*) For Infectious Cases. No local provisions. Ambulance from Whipton Isolation Hospital fetches cases of infectious disease accepted for admission to that Institution.

(*b*) For Non-Infectious and Accident Cases. The East Devon Motor Ambulance, provided by the Red Cross and St. John Societies, is available. It is stationed at Honiton (Telephone No. 33 Honiton), and is supported by voluntary Contributions, and Fees charged for its use. I am informed that it is not self-

Ambulance Facilities (continued)

supporting, as the scale of charges is very moderate, and much lower than the rate charged for similar Ambulances in the Exeter district. The Ambulance is managed by a Committee of the V.A.D.

There is now also an Ambulance of the Axminster and District Division of the St. John Ambulance Brigade, stationed at Axminster.

CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

(a) Maternity and Child Welfare. No local centre. The Voluntary Centre which existed for several years was closed in 1924, on account of the small attendance of mothers and children.

(b) A Lady Health Visitor appointed by the C. C. works in the district. She is officially notified of all Births, and visits the mothers at their homes ; and gives instructions and advice. She is also Official School Nurse.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY.

The M. O. H. and Sanitary Inspector : are whole-time officers. Half salaries paid by C C. The Sanitary Inspector is also Surveyor.

PROFESSIONAL NURSING IN THE HOME.

(a) General. The Seaton Nursing Association employs a District Nurse approved by the C. C. She attends Maternity and Non-Infectious Cases, and her Services are available for the Sick poor.

(b) For Infectious Cases. No Local Provision.

Midwives.

The District Nurse is the only R. M.

Prevalence and Control over Infectious Disease.

Diphtheria Antitoxin is used by all the Medical Practitioners, and is issued free to those who cannot afford to pay for a supply.

The County Authorities undertake the Bacteriological work for the district.

NON-NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.

This is rather difficult to report on, as the only basis to go on, are the reports of the teachers on children absent from school, and I have no statistics for the period under review.

All arrangements for treatment of Tuberculosis Patients are made by the County ; that is, if they require Sanatorium Treatment.

MILK. Food Supply.

There were 10 cow-keepers and dairymen on the register at the end of the year. Several inspections have been made.

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|----|
| No. registered as producer-retailer | ... | 10 |
| „ „ „ producer-wholesaler | ... | 10 |
| „ „ „ retailer only | ... | 10 |

There were 2 removed from the register, who had given up business.

There were 3 examinations of milk samples for cleanliness, which proved satisfactory

The cowsheds and methods of producing clean milk were found generally satisfactory.

BAKEHOUSES.

No. in district, 4. No. of Inspections, 6.

SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.

Registered and Licensed premises, 3 ; have been inspected on several occasions and notice of slaughtering has been duly carried out. There is no public abattoir.

Amount of unfit food destroyed (home killed) Beef, 18 lbs. ; amount of unfit meat (imported), 12 lbs. Chilled Beef.

Method of disposal of condemned meat is by burning in an Incinerator.

Water Supply.

Samples are submitted regularly for chemical and bacteriological examinations. No. of samples taken, 8.

The water supply is very satisfactory.

Housing.

No. of houses not in all respects fit for human habitation, 7. Number repaired, 3. No. of informal notices to remedy, 3. No. complied with, 3. No. of closing orders made, 4. No. determined, 4.

Overcrowding.

There were 2 cases, which have been remedied.

Disinfection.

There is no steam-disinfection available. Methods of disinfection for clothing, bedding, rooms, furniture, etc., is by fumigation and disinfection.

No. of houses disinfected for :—

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----|-----|---|
| Notifiable infectious diseases | ... | ... | 8 |
| Tuberculosis | ... | ... | 2 |

Tuberculosis Patients are offered and supplied with sputum cups and disinfectants, and any drugs, e.g., Diphtheria Anti-toxin, are provided by the Local Authority, free of cost.

Drainage.

The drainage is generally satisfactory.

Scavenging.

The methods for the disposal of refuse in houses are satisfactory.

Arrangements have been made by your Council for the removal and destruction of house refuse by a covered refuse collection vehicle, and burnt by an incinerator.

Nuisances.

No. of complaints received, 5. No. of informal notices served, 5. Results — effective 5.

Schools.

No. in district, 1 Public, 2 Private. No. inspected, 3.

Byelaws.

Building, Cowsheds, etc., are in force in your district.

Your obedient servant,

DUNCOMBE STEELE PERKINS,
Medical Officer of Health.

Smith's,
Printers,
Seaton,
Devon.

Fel. : 114.